The COMMONWEAL

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Totally Unsatisfactory

REPLYING to Ambassador Smith's May 4th Statement to the Soviet Government, the Russians proclaim: "The U.S.S.R. Government declares that it intends also in the future to pursue this policy with complete consistency." Just exactly what policy "this" refers to is not grammatically certain from the syntax, but the meaning is too evident: The Soviet pledges itself to the same line of action which they have taken progressively since the war.

The exchange of statements as published in the papers of 11 May can fruitfully be translated into a series of requests, or demands, made in each direction across the world. The American demands are modest enough and are naturally enough felt by normally informed, and troubled, Americans to need no recapitulation here. Not any single one of them is honored by the Russians with the slightest recognition: they are all dismissed as invalid and without any basis in justice or fact.

The counter-statement of the Russian Government can most realistically be interpreted as making a sweeping series of outrageous demands, to be met and accepted before the Russians will give any hope for an alleviation of the international tension. Thus—

"The policy of the USSR in Eastern Europe and the increase in the influence of the Soviet Union" is not to be questioned, but accepted as proper. The "treaties of friendship and mutual assistance" are to be recognized as legitimate and sacrosanct. The "Soviet Union will continue in the future to pursue a policy of strengthening friendly relations with these countries of Europe." The "democratic changes" in the Soviet sphere of activity are to be honored as if the communist falsification of their nature were true. It is right that Communists take the leading positions in the countries which are to become Russian satellites. The Soviet does not influence the internal affairs of other countries in any way to justify the United States in taking political measures with them. The United States must not be allowed to influence the course of democracy in other countries, such as Greece.

The European Economic Program does not respect the sovereignty of the nations involved, in the Soviet charges, and must be revolutionized according to unstated Russian whims, and made "normal" and within the UN. The five-nation treaty in Europe is wicked and is possible because of US sponsorship. Unspecified "military threats" are directed against Russia by parties close to Washington. US-Russian trade is disrupted by American hostile policy.

Most important of all: "The creation of such a tense situation is encouraged primarily by the steps taken by the Government of the United States toward the still greater development of the network of military, naval and aircraft bases in all parts of the globe, and including territories neighboring on the USSR."

Eliminate every one of these complaints by compliance with the demand inherent in each one, while Russia, "with complete consistency," rejects every Western demand and justifies every Russian and Communist deed and interpretation, and then the Soviet will be benevolent.

It would be utterly disastrous to meet the Soviet on any such basis. Indeed, the United States would have absolutely no right to meet alone with Russia to endorse situations which involve other peoples as the most directly affected victims. With extraordinarily cynical realism, and insolent presumption, the Russians and the Communists appear to be trying to take advantage of American loathing of the atmosphere of hostility and dread of more war in order to gather up another Yalta and Potsdam jackpot. How they betray themselves by sweeping aside all questions of Soviet overrunning nations, of

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Soviet identity with Communist forces abroad, of the basic "extension of area of Soviet Power . . . the progressive domination by one country of its neighbors . . . (the creation of a) world divided into two major groupings"—which made the burden of the American statement—and focus upon military bases! The problems of truth and justice and liberty and a workable world order are meaningless twaddle in the mouth of our Ambassador. Russia would like to clean up that remaining military, naval and aerial question, once, no doubt, and for all.

The Greek Executions

IN December, 1944, there was some kind of a revolt in Athens and we do not remember anything about it and we cannot bother to look it up in the files. Call it a communist revolt. As a by-product of that revolt, a certain number of men and women were convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Had they been executed at the time we would not be speaking about them now. They were not executed at the time; they were left in jail—until May, 1948. Then they were taken out of jail, in groups of fifteen, twenty, twenty-five and placed before a firing squad. They were shot immediately after the assassination of the Greek Minister of Justice. There had been some delay about carrying out the decree of justice in their case, explained the Greek Government, a regrettable delay, which now is remedied.

The Greek Government was explaining matters to the British Government, because the English despite their socialism, are old-fashioned; they are like old people with old enduring memories—among which possibly was the memory of Spanish execution of hostages and German execution of hostages and Russian execution of hostages. The English people did not like to have these memories revived by Greek mass executions, whether of criminals or of hostages, because in their memories when hostages were shot they were always called criminals by those who shot them, and in their memories mass executions were always retaliatory in character. And so the British Government was old-fashioned enough to ask officially for explanations.

It got them, it accepted them (what else could it do?). Mr. Hector McNeil, speaking in the House, passed them on to the British people: " . . . repugnant as it is to our ideas that there should be so long a delay before condemned criminals are executed, those delays have been in great part due to congestion in the Greek judicial machinery worsened by conditions created by persons receiving outside support."

Such are the dismal rewards accorded the British for having felt "distress and anxiety." But what is the reward for those who—unlike the British—felt nothing at all when they read about the executions? What will be our reward in America for our silence? It will be to become enmeshed in violence, increasingly inured to violence, accepting it in others, and drawn to it ourselves.

Strikes and Essential Services

THE FACT that the nation is living from crisis to crisis, in its major industries and basic services, may be taken as a token of strength or of weakness. The strength of our system under its present strains is indicated by the way the public takes in its stride the prospect of homes and industries deprived of heat and fuel, workers unable to reach their jobs, farmers blocked from shipping their perishables and cities strapped for food. Instead of panic or hysteria a sublime confidence that somehow things will be worked out. Or again there is something unregimented, if not ruggedly democratic, about the way unions and management come to grips in labor disputes—with the government circling about trying to foster an agreement which is mutually acceptable. The very give and take of these labor-management contests, the all-out character of actual strikes and strikes fore-stalled only by extraordinary government intervention, are indications of national self-confidence and latent strength.

On the other hand, the fact that so many major industrial disputes get to the last-resort, strike stage indicates weakness: either machinery for reaching agreements is inadequate or labor and management are poles apart in their point of view, probably both. Under current inflationary pressures this means that threatened strikes in such basic services as coal mining, railroads, public utilities and shipping are almost inevitable.

From the viewpoint of the common good should strikes be banned in such "essential industries?" Does the major disruption which such stoppages occasion implicitly rule out the right to strike there? Certainly if the workers in those services are to be deprived of their one strong weapon in disputes with management, there must be adequate counterbalances. But do enough compensating factors exist? These days labor spokesmen are overworking the argument of higher corporation profits as they press for additional wage increases, but profits would assuredly have to be strictly limited in any industry in which strikes are prohibited by law. Profit-sharing and adequate pensions—and a certain measure of job security—could also be big compensating factors. But would union leaders agree that it would all add up to enough?

In the case of the railroads restrictions on strikes are already considerable. By the Rail-

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way Labor Act of 1926 no strike can be called until the dispute has been submitted to a fact-finding board, and if the Taft-Hartley Act is amended to apply to railroads, then 80-day injunctions against striking could be issued. The 1916 law under which Mr. Truman seized the railroads is still in force, and once the railroads are in government hands the unions are subject to court order. There is a crude sort of machinery. It remains to be seen whether it can actually produce a formula to settle the questions still in dispute.

The President's Emergency Board which studied the wage demands of the engineers, firemen and enginemen, and switchmen for 33 days before rejecting them were disinterested, public-spirited men of great competence in such matters. Their decision appears sound. On future occasions, under whatever administration, could the unions count on appointees of a similar caliber? To the extent that they would agree henceforth to abide by board decisions regardless?

One school would maintain that if these services are so indispensable to the nation, they should be taken over by the government and operated for the good of all. This rests on the socialist fallacy that state ownership is synonymous with efficiency, justice to all and the broadest human liberty. The state—like the strike—is a last resort only to be called upon when all better methods have proved unavailing.

In short, it would seem that with certain modifications the present American system—or lack of system—of handling labor disputes in essential industries is preferable to any scheme of inadequately compensated compulsions which has yet turned up.

Bugle for a Bourgeois

THE MUSEUM of Modern Art in New York is currently showing a comprehensive exhibition by Pierre Bonnard, who died, aged 80, last year. He was born nineteen years after the Communist Manifesto first appeared; he survived both World Wars, both victories. Yet his pictures, from the earliest shown, of a dead pheasant, to the last, of a cherry tree in exultant blossom, though infinite in effect are circumscribed in effects. A village scene with children and black goats; a girl drooping over her dessert, with the bow of the bonne's apron, her back to the artist, for all emphasis; two bunches of grapes on a plate; a pot of strawberries; and, over and over again, a table laid for the simplest of daily meals, now with bread, wine cake, nuts; now with bananas, oranges, a checked tablecloth: these—banal, unexciting, and above all, intimate, are what Bonnard affirms. And, under his brush, these are Davidian pebbles, that penetrate all our disguises, that catch us, unaware, where we never imagined we were vulnerable. As we start looking, we are oh, so bored. For we are so busy forever blowing ourselves up, like the frog who would be a cow, with our world-plans, our visions of United Nations, our ERP, our Western unity, and our Atomic bomb stockpiles, that we would contemptuously dismiss the silly old Frenchman, bid him go bite his buns, since he's so fond of them. Then, as we stare, at the carefully painted mansard roofs, where, on one sill, is a tiny canary in a cage, or at the firm, straight red-ribbon-tied pigtail of the little girl skipping, or at the white circus horse that looks at us out of hollow eyes with all of the pity of all the Rosinantes for the fools her riders be, we begin to wonder if the painter has not found some unsuspected breach in the synthetic, ideological pomposity of our armored self-importance?

Perhaps something instinctive in us, that knows what we need, has prompted a Bonnard exhibition just now? Sick cats search grass, and cows lick rock-salt; maybe this French bourgeois has something after all? When an American millionairess was divorcing a European nobleman, his lawyer pleaded, "Madame had married one of the greatest names in the world, and possessed the position that name carried with it, and she wished the bourgeois virtues as well? Was she not unreasonable?" We have the power and the glory, the dominion and the victory, yet perhaps it is the bourgeois realities, a sunlit window, the pattern of shadows on a wall, that, unreasonably, we need. There has always been a curious closeness, a to-and-fro commerce of comfort and succor, between America and France. Nor is it without good reason that what the Communist hates most is the petty bourgeois, the Sunday suit, and the cultivated garden.

During the five black years, 1938-43, Bonnard was peacefully in his own house, painting the view from his window, the trees in his garden, the luncheon on his table. In the irridescence of his color, the play of light on foliage or water, in his awareness of shimmering summer heat or of spring's jubilation there is nothing but affirmation: each picture is a completely satisfactory statement of an integrated view of life, of a "holism" as General Smuts would call it. But the little, anxious, ugly, ordinary face of Bonnard as he painted himself, would frown, would deprecate these words; he would shy from them, as from all undue emphasis. For to him, the condition of "seeing eternity in a grain of sand, and infinity in an hour," and of being able to show them so to us, was obedience to the command given in Exodus, when from out of the dark cloud God said: "you shall not make gods of silver, nor gods of gold; you shall make an *altar of earth* unto Me."

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Essay on a Town

"All are alike, though
each makes marvelous
boast upon its own icon."

Le Garde S. Doughty

TO MEET an entity you must indeed approach it. And in approaching you must choose some point from which to come. When the entity to be met is a human being you customarily approach head-on. It would be somewhat eccentric, to say the least, if you should approach one to be met at the rear or on a flank; and such bizarre approach would not infer good auspice, for, putting yourself in the situation of one to be met, think how vexing it would be to be met at side or behind, and thus to hear without critical sight the always doubtable cliché, "So glad to meet you."

Quiddity? Perhaps! But no quibble . . .

. . . for consider that the entity to be met is a town, a thing enclosed within a boundary of equivalent parts, without front, back, or sides; or, if some querulous pedant wish more quiddity, the approaches to a town are all sides, quid pro quo, tit for tat, alike—surely no front, no back. And it is resolved that this town shall be met not superficially at any casual angle, but from the best approach and to the very essence.

One long-ago day a pioneer drove a stake on the bank of a river. That stake became Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia. For approach I choose to bring you in at the north, though I be called scalawag for it. North I choose, and principally for the reason that the town started right smack there, a speck on that northern line, the river Savannah.

In the early 1730's, James Edward Oglethorpe, philanthropist and member of Parliament, having investigated the London debtors' prison, and not liking what he found, arranged for the colonization of insolvent debtors in North America. In January, 1733, he and a party of colonists arrived at Charleston, South Carolina, and shortly afterward founded Savannah, Georgia. Simple when you read it in a book of history concerned with nothing but names, dates, and the straight line of external facts. But it takes no exhaustive research to know there were listings to starboard, listings to port, and bumping fore and aft; salt winds twisting like bullwhacks against many a weird grimace; desperate swigs of brandy turning like spurts of oil on many a squeaking nerve. Percentages have never been calculated, but it is hardly off fair estimate to assume that the native hosts, controlling bunk, chuck, and incidental common requisites, were summarily flimflammed into a very, very lopsided contract issuing from, say five percent beneficence and the rest buncombe in fulsomest variety.

Expansion was on the calendar. In 1735 Oglethorpe sent a party up the river to found Augusta; and (with all respect to the philanthropist's beatific confusion) to sell the aborigines down the creek without a paddle.

The philanthropist was no founder of things for mere sake of founding; Augusta was founded as a trading post to cut in on the Indian business (a bead for a buckskin) that was going to South Carolina. And the philanthropist was no sentimental gull either; he ordered up a fort, and a fort was built in the willows by the river. And close to its rugged shoulder, a whispering length away, the feminine river; lisping, lilting, willowy, feminine river! (Some coarse-shirted minstrel sprawled with twig in teeth must have said that one day. And pastoral Wordsworth could not have idylized it much more softly).

In time they built a church by the fort. And it would take a mortal cynic to say it was not good. But good as it was to build a church, the matter was not without fault. Some pious scoundrel back in the centuries described it as "a handsome and convenient church." And the grandiloquent phrase has been quoted and re-quoted in pamphlet and panegyric to this day, though it is one of the lesser marvels of time and chance why the first quoter and the last did not bolt away from it in temperamental rage, poetic fury.

Simple, reverential church builded of burly logs. Is it not Gothic in its rudeness? Is it not Gothic in the savage hardness of its benches? A Gothic church; an austerely beautiful church, perhaps; but that "handsome and convenient" is a plug for a fountain pen.

Now to meet Augusta—to grasp it intimately by the soul, coming as aforesaid from the north. You cross by the railroad bridge at Sixth (Washington) Street buttressed in the actual shadow of St. Paul's Church and buttressed deeper in the ghostly shadow of the old fort, for St. Paul's stands upon its powdered bones; or you come by

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the highway bridge at Fifth (Center) Street buttressed in a flank of the wharf. Coming by the latter the first conspicuous thing you see is *Coca Cola—Delicious and Refreshing.* Coming by the former, a counterpart, *Royal Crown Cola* (no adjectives appended as to quality and effect). Between St. Paul's and the wharf there is no dogwood, no magnolia, nor even a straggly crawl of periwinkle. Frankly, that stretch of several abject acres is as prime an eyesore of junk as Providence could tangle with a waist-high stand of weeds; willy-nilly mess from crusted hog-wire ends to cankered oil drums.

Garden City of the South! And no rake.—Then the phenomenon will have to be cleared up with a pencil. Augusta is different from other places only in that it alone is the second oldest city in Georgia and third most populous. It is quite the same as other places in that it has a democratic title and a capitalistic text. The climax of such a text is wealth, not gardens, appearances, or people per se. Of course, with eighty thousand motile characters, the incidents and settings are as diffuse as winnowed feathers; but the end is wealth.

It is not a curious lot, then, but a share in the common paradox that Augusta is, attitudinally, not so many people at an accomplishable level of wellbeing, but so many enterprises at an accomplished level of prosperity.

Folders are embellished with monoliths, memorials, boyhood homes, vistas, and golf greens, but these are marginal, like the scalloped gilt on bonds; remote, like watermarks. Wealth is the nuclear fetch, calling potential immigrants from all points everywhere, as all points everywhere, with similar folders, are calling potential emigrants away. Cut and paraphrased to the quick, the invitation is: Come, if you have a purse, a dexterity, or a hand, to combine with us in our wealth building for keeps, catch-as-catch-can.

It has the look of simple concentration and addition. That is the perspective from Broad and Eighth streets overlooking the control center of a double armful of industries: cotton, cottonseed, textile, kaolin, lumber, fertilizer, et cetera, old and new. But from the understructure, where Pine Street is mortised in the canal bank, it has the look of complex diffusion and subtraction. New York has its Park Avenue and its Mott Street; and thus the economic segments sprawl in criminal disparity wherever people gather to collaborate with mutually slaughterous fury; which observation, no apology for Augusta, is just a matter of involving all the kettles along with the pot.

This sort of analysis is democratic or radical, depending on whether the reader thinks with active mind or with stagnant blood. And if a shrewd man's Buick has logical precedence over a crude man's belly, Oglethorpe was a malicious idealist for springing insolvent riffraff out of a London gaol.

It may be worth mentioning that elegant snuffboxes were spiff along the Thames in those days. It was quite the thing for gentlemen of the upper scum to pack different snuffboxes for all the days of the week. And the boxes were nothing like Buttercup tins of the twentieth century. They were made of as many materials as went then and go now into feminine adornments, up to ivory and gold. Smiths, engravers, and artists in miniature put their talents to the art of designing, coloring, and ornamenting snuffboxes; as serious an art for a time as murals in Rome. One could determine a gentleman's quality by the housings of his pulverized tobacco. So—judge a debtor by his debts, a creditor by his snuffboxes.

★

If you walk through the mold of calendar leaves it is a long way from the creak of the prison gate to the flash of the traffic light. At Broad and Eighth you will see no snuffbox and no warrant for a debtor. But by way of analogy it is not so far. Broad and Eighth is an intersection of neon and chromium, but you can look away to soot and sallow paint. A good Rotarian tour from the intersection will take you straight up Broad Street. After crossing Eleventh it will be a good Rotarian idea to buff your fingernails a time or two and gaze a while on the polish of your shoe-toes. Meanwhile your Rotarian host will be telling you that you are describing a line parallel to the river, a scant quarter-mile north, and that the strip between your line and the river, for a stretch of about twelve blocks, was a battle course during the Revolution. Not big headline items, those battles; just bits of fighting in which men died as successfully from consolidated lead as they died shortly ago from split atoms. But maybe your guide will not think to remind you that in each case the mortal explosion was simply a suppuration from the old sore of world economy.

Having done with the vestige of war you will shortly round Julian Smith Park, a magnificent terrain of shrubs, pine needles, and shady paths, dropping down at the sharp slant of a cottage roof some three hundred feet to a broad, placid lake. You will then round a shoulder of the lake, cross its neck, and lean into an upgrade curve on Washington Road; and in five minutes you will turn left upon the upper terrace of the Augusta National Golf Course, confronted with a bold sweep of landscape architecture that, putting it flatly, is hard to beat anywhere. Your Rotarian will tell you the course was designed on a plan that borrowed features of famous courses all over the world. He will tell you that the

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noted Alistair McKenzie and the great Bobby Jones laid out the course; but he will not mention the oily black muscles that did the work. He will tell you too what newspapers have told you annually for some time, that the Masters Invitation Tournament blooms on this course each spring along with magnolias, azaleas, dogwood flowers, et cetera, et cetera. He may tell you how many tons of newspaper copy have gone over the world about that tournament; perhaps enough to make an old-fashioned scalloped shelf-cover for every pantry in North America. He will tell you that this spot was years and years the home and garden of a man with the cartel-ish name, Prosper J. A. Berckmans, a mild horiculturist who left a print of flowers on the South; that the clubhouse is the old stony manor house that Berckmans built in the 1850's; that many of the blossoming things strewn about wherever you look were set by Berckmans's hand. He will tell you that Berckmans is best remembered perhaps for his roses and roses and roses. But it is hardly certain that he will think to add the somewhat inevitable declarative question: Can one be better remembered than for roses?

The Rotarian will drive you back across Lake Olmstead, along a skirt of town on Milledge Road. Passing the Country Club you will observe the right routes and cover considerable mileage without a mote on your eye. You will be travelling one of the really fine residential areas of Georgia where the scale is good middling to fancy. Some of the places you will find just somewhat more than neat, some handsome, some beautiful, some even noble; of course you may have to wink at a few architectural fiascos, like Grant's Tomb with built-in housekeeping rooms. But you know what to expect in any bushel of apples.

There are places downtown your guide will wish you to see. Monuments along Greene Street with carven sentiments. Some of them stir sympathy in the beholder; others are just stone. Perhaps your guide will not remark on this—but it is a remarkable thing that people erect memorials and cut sentiments into them in deference to dead men who actually or supposedly were models of behavior more or less ideal. It is a way of assigning these men to actual nobility (belatedly, one must lament) for having undergone hardship, sacrifice, or death for one cause or another in which personal gain was in no degree an incentive. The memorial is erected, gathered about, unveiled, orated on. The gatherers bow heads, take on solemn faces, strike breasts, then walk off to business as usual whistling "Beer-Barrel Polka." If they feel no impulse to pick up some fraction of the humanitarianism they have glorified, at least they might whistle "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" more appropriately.

The Chamber of Commerce lists some forty points of interest in that downtown section, most of them old residences; some few of them really interesting; for example, the old Nicholas Ware Home on Telfair Street, built in 1808, with its horseshoe stairways up to the door and its warm bay windows. In a setting of ancient foliage, it stands in grace and dignity over a viny iron fence. Coming upon it you think: If a house were self-impelling, this is the way it would grow.

But it is time for lunch; the Rotarian has to go. So you are left on your own. He departs with, "LaFayette danced in that house." He is probably right.

Some five hundred yards northwest of the old home stands the Richmond County Courthouse, a somnolent, sprawling, elegant old gray wreck with a dome, and a bronze Justice on top. Old World patina on the outside is good, but old age filth on the inside is not. The building is a good show, you will see, but a sorry place to be tried in, for that dull, lugubrious hang of its interior has the look of capital punishment at the outset. But that, perhaps, is only a depression complex of the beholder, for were the walls of ivory the fearfulness would be the same. One cannot go on counting human error the only threat to justice. The lawyers shout too loud and scheme too bookishly.

Patina is on the trees. Patina is on the ground. Patina is on the crenellated walls of the Library across the lawns and the street, and on the doric columns of the abandoned school next to it. These buildings went up in 1802 and 1835; and the roots of some of the trees around them went down longer ago; they have that look anyhow, lying like pythons.

No neon and no chromium and no subterfuge along these shaded grounds. If one can look through surface and see into core, this is the place. Here is the past. The present is around the corner. The future is tomorrow. Some live in the past alone; they live in despair. Some live only in the present; they live in death, though they pirouette around from nothing to nothing with the animation of ballet. Some live only in the future; they live in defeat. But some live completely; and there is no better spot in Georgia than that little stretch of Telfair Street for these to smile at the loneliness of three-dimensional sight.

Out on Fenwick Street the old Augusta Factory leans on its haunches waiting for something to happen. Dismantled the last many years, it was a tremendous textile plant a century ago. It is completely surrounded by slums that would be at home in the low end of New York City. Progress has moved the machines from the center but not God's images from the rim.

Facing south at Twelfth Street alongside the factory, you look toward an area roughly in the

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shape of an ovate leaf. The stem of it, along Twelfth a few blocks, is white; but where the leaf broadens out to a width of about fifteen blocks and all along its length of some thirty blocks is mostly yellow, brown, and black. If you go straight down the blade of the leaf by motor you will get a blurry impression of stores, shops, and dwellings trying their best with paint and petunias to attain to something better than squat shabbiness. But if you take your time and walk in and out along the nervures you will get a clear impression of the state of the Nation. Perhaps you will get the impression that Babson reports and Kiplinger letters are of the ultimate importance of bridge-table chitchat. You will probably ask what percentage of Augusta's population is Negro. The answer is about forty percent. And the principal area of its dwelling is within the serrate borders of that ovate leaf. These people built Augusta; these and the white people who make no headlines. They did not fashion the blueprints or utter the postprandial speeches, of course; and they did not furnish the capital, one would add with pointed finger. Pick, shovel, hod, hand, and shoulder—these they built with. Labor. Mere labor. Economists speak volubly of capital and labor, as if they were antonyms. But it may occur to you somewhere along an edge of the leaf that they are not antonyms; that they, on the contrary, are something even closer than synonyms; that they actually are appositives—cause and effect; labor the cause, capital the effect; that getting down to the paradoxical essence, they are one thing—labor *is* capital, unidentified.

These thoughts are as much a part of Augusta as the Confederate monument on Broad Street, though unquestionably not seen by as many people. And the best place to review these thoughts and kindred thoughts is the roof of the tallest building, from which position every man is just a hat, and every hat is indistinguishable humility.

Augusta has no race troubles, in the ordinary sense of the term. Augusta does have race irritations when unhappy politicians of high egoism and low integrity return periodically to the anachronistic theme of white supremacy. Supremacy of any sort is unbecoming doctrine in the United States; and Augusta, Georgia, is as much a Constitutional unit as Washington, D. C. The principle of supremacy in its most naïve innocence is a narcotic; in its most flagrant guilt it is a poison—in Augusta, Georgia.

Why is the notion of white supremacy propounded in Augusta, Georgia? Certainly not to oppose black supremacy; no such counter-notion has existence. It is propounded to liven the ferment of barbaric emotion. And the proponent, beware, is picking your pocket as he feeds you yeast. Basically, though the rousers may not know it, the supremacy postulate is a political means toward an economic end; it has nothing at all to do with social equality. Ethnological trends are not determined in such public places as political platforms and voting booths. The white supremacy agitators are the town's communists with right-hand drive, contributing their benighted share to whatever worldwide hell may lie ahead for all the Augustas on the globe.

For seasonal culture Augusta imports symphonic music from Minneapolis, Cincinnati, Washington, and Baltimore; and ballets, operatic groups, and soloists from New York.

For entertainment the town imports from California some eight or ten movies a week; invariably puerile, of course, because that term qualifies, one way or another, all the movies the West Coast has so far synthetized out of mental fat and fair weather.

For folk amenities there are the common things from elegant piffle under the prismatic glitter of a tinkling chandelier to ribald patois around the smudgy glow of pigfeet pickled in a stagnant jar; and somewhere along the line there is talk in soft lemon light along dark ribs of books—ashamed, bewildered, self-conscious talk of ones who do not know and know they do not know and grow neurotic with the strife to know the all that none can know.

Besides all those there is a forum, four concrete sections more or less, situate, lying, and being between a cigar store's front end and a bus stop, formerly in the name (or squatter's claim) of a wooden Indian. There the powers nod and shake and murmur in the words of dynasties, present, past, and secretly abuilding. And if the Alps of statecraft do not rise thereat, the shards of syntax fall. And many a day some bovine hulk with megalomania between its ears looks out across the steppe of Broad and Eighth merely to see what things are whither bound.

Encyclopedically speaking, Augusta, Ga., U.S.A., is located at the head of navigation on the Savannah River, 790m. S. by W. of New York, and 840m. S. by E. of Chicago, etc.

As a matter of deeper truth, Augusta is Everywhere, south of virtue, north of evil, east of common sense, west of stupidity, abutting them all.

Greek Guerrillas

SARAH WAMBAUGH

WHY HAVE twenty thousand young Greeks "gone to the mountains" to fight against their own government? Why are they burning hundreds of Greek villages, killing the able-bodied men that they cannot kidnap? If the guerrillas are Communist, why are they Communist?

This last October I talked in Saloníki with

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three guerrillas who had gone to the mountains as ardent Communists, had there repented because of what they saw with their own eyes, and had managed to break through the tight net of their leaders and surrender to the Greek Army forces. Their stories, striking in their similarity, show how the Communist organizers make their appeal to the very sense of patriotism which they affect to despise.

Each of the three ex-guerrillas had fought for the Communist Revolution in Greece because of the promises of the Communist organizers that it would bring Utopia to Greece. Each had been eager to bring about a better life for his own country and countrymen. Under the cunning tutelage of the Communist lecturers each had believed that the daily papers were lying when they carried accounts of the guerrillas wilfully attacking and burning Greek villages and killing civilians, and each had completely disbelieved the statements, even though confirmed by the United Nations Balkan Mission, that the guerrillas were accepting aid from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania, the three Soviet satellites across the northern frontier. As soon as each had joined the guerrillas, however, he had learned from his own experience that all these charges were true, and so had determined to seize the first opportunity to escape and surrender under the amnesty which covered all political crimes—though not murder. Any effort to escape was extremely dangerous, but by good luck and good judgment each one had succeeded.

The first man, about twenty-six years of age, was seemingly well educated. He was the son of a prosperous citizen of Naousa, a large manufacturing town in western Macedonia. When the Germans left, the father had been made mayor of the town by EAM, "the Popular Resistance Front," which was under the hidden direction of Communist leaders. The son, who had become a Communist, had been commander of a reserve regiment of ELAS, the guerrilla army of EAM which had attempted to seize power over Greece in the civil war of December, 1944. Under the Varkiza Agreement which ended the EAM-ELAS revolt the son had returned to Naousa and was acting as the EAM member of the local Communist Party Committee. Soon the father was arrested on a charge of murder, of which eight months later he was acquitted. Immediately on his arrest the local EAM organization forced the son to "go to the mountains" because, so he put it to me, "they wished to be able to say that in spite of the Varkiza Agreement the father was persecuted and I was forced to flee."

The son had become a communist because communist organizers had promised freedom from the Germans and a better standard of living for the Greek people, and he had agreed with them that "Greece must have a democracy like that in Russia and Bulgaria." When I asked what he meant by democracy in those two countries he said that he meant their system of state ownership and administration of industry. I asked whether the one-party, police-state structure of the two governments did not trouble him and he said that in the mountains he had begun to worry about that and to see that the communist propaganda "was contrary to reality." Moreover, he soon saw that the guerrillas were being helped by the Yugoslavs and Bulgarians, and not in order to bring about a communist régime in Greece but to annex the northern part of Greece to their own countries.

In the ELAS forces there were Bulgarian regiments. When the Germans left, it became plain, he said, that these Bulgars had not been fighting to set up communism in Greece but to seize Macedonia and Thrace for the Slavs. For a time the ELAS had fought them, but then it became known that the leader of EAM, the communist Zachariades, had made a secret agreement with Tito to give Macedonia to the Yugoslavs, and was saying that ELAS must cooperate in the project. This outraged the guerrilla from Naousa and he began to watch eagerly for a chance to escape. It was exceedingly dangerous to talk with anyone in the guerrilla forces about plans for escaping, for the man he selected might be a Communist Party member, but at last his care and vigilance were rewarded. After some "mopping-up operations" he was sent with another guerrilla to a nearby village to seize food and they stealthily went on through the village to a house on the outskirts and escaped.

The second man had been master of a school in Veria, a small town not far from Naousa. He, too, had been an officer in the ELAS and had been converted by communist organizers who had talked to him only of liberty and a higher standard of living for Greece and had kept silent as to the communist views on religion, the family and patriotism. After the Varkiza Agreement he had returned freely to his school, but later he was ordered to another school, which was in a village under guerrilla domination. He did not want to go, for he knew the guerrillas would force him to go to the mountains, but his wife, his mother and his six children were all dependent on him and he dared not refuse for fear he would lose his position in the public service, so he went to the new school. For a time he managed to stand off the pressure of the guerrillas, but they were determined to have him, he said, because he was a man of reputation and if he went to the mountains others would follow him. At the end of two months he was forced to go. During his six months with them in the mountains he got involved in discussions which showed the real

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views of the communists as to the family, religion and patriotism. The leaders became suspicious as to his devotion to the Revolution and he saw that he must quickly escape. After managing to secure protection for his family by the Greek Army he finally succeeded in getting away from the guerrillas during one of their raids. He surrendered and the Government is finding him another school. His concluding words to me were: "It is so very difficult for simple peasants to see through the communist promises."

★

The third guerrilla, the youngest of the three, was also a man of some education. He had been an officer in the Greek Army in the Middle East during the Second World War and had there been converted to communism by Party organizers. He said: "The communists are extremely clever in getting close to a man. They select those who are disappointed or whose work is not going well, and promise better times." The Communist Party, he said, "got everyone because they spoke only of liberty, and every Greek loves liberty, and at that time only the ELAS was fighting against the Germans, and, though it was under the secret direction of the Communist Party, it was insisting that its political front, EAM, represented the whole Greek people." The communist lecturers were always busy, he said, and it was the first time he had ever heard talk of political theory, and he liked it. He liked also the idea of raising the standard of living of the Greeks.

When the Greek Army in Egypt, stirred up by EAM agents, started a mutiny, he took part in it. In consequence he was interned, but he was soon liberated and put in a regiment guarding dumps. After the Germans had left Greece he was restored to regular service and stationed on the Yugoslav frontier. He was still an ardent believer in the communist revolution, and when the guerrillas started their war in the mountains, he thought that they were fighting to apply communist theories to Greece and managed to get in touch with them. The Army naturally found this out and put him in prison in Saloniki but the local Communist Party helped him to escape and to "go to the mountains," where he was put in command of a guerrilla company active in the hills of the Chalcidice, southeast of Saloniki.

Before he went to the mountains this guerrilla, like the others, believed that the papers had been lying when they said that the bands were killing civilians, burning villages and cooperating with the Slav neighbors. Now he saw for himself that these charges were true, for he was himself ordered to kill and burn. He often objected to his superior officers: "But can't you give the man a trial, no matter how simple, before you kill him?" They answered: "Do not be so big-hearted. We have started the Revolution. To succeed we shall have to kill a lot of innocent people!"

His dreams of a better world through the communist revolution were completely shattered by his experience in the mountains. At last he managed to escape and surrender. To my question whether he thought the communist organizers really believed in communism he answered that they probably do, but that they are "fanatics who have had to kill all human feelings and become coldly cruel." He illustrated this by telling of an attack his force was ordered to make on a gendarme post. Because of cross-fire, in order to get at the post they had to burn the house in front. The commander ordered the guerrilla who owned the house to set fire to it. This he did, although he knew that his wife, his mother and his baby were in it and he could not warn them. He was a communist of thirteen years' standing, and he said that he was not going to let family feeling stand in the way of the Revolution.

When I asked this third ex-guerrilla how large was the probable proportion of real communists among the men on the mountains he answered about 35 percent. The rest, he said, had been forced to go with them, or had been lured by communist promises and had long since seen that they were lies and now would certainly get away if only their leaders had not made escape so terribly dangerous as to be practically impossible.

No one of the three guerrillas with whom I spoke charged persecution by the Greek Government as the reason for his going to the mountains, or said that the government is fascist. The truth is that since the Metaxas dictatorship, which ended with the beginning of the Second World War, there has been no fascist government in Greece. The Tsaldaris government, which was constitutionally elected on March 31, 1946, under the observation of the Allied Mission, was a conservative one. The Greeks, revolted by the many inhuman crimes of ELAS in December, 1944, elected it in the hope that it would save the country from another taste of communism. But, inept and unprogressive as it was, it was far from being fascist, as witness the fact that throughout the Tsaldaris régime the Communist Party and its affiliate, the EAM, although actively promoting sedition, were allowed to function as they chose, their headquarters only a short distance from the Parliament building and the government offices, and their newspapers appearing freely every day. It is only now, at this very late date and after the government has been placed under the Liberal Prime Minister, Themistocles Sophoulis, that the communist papers and the Communist Party, and with it the EAM and its papers, are being suppressed. With Greece as endangered as it has

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been for many months by guerrilla warfare aided by the Soviet satellites, such delay can be criticized as foolhardy, but it surely absolves the government of fascism.

The rank and file guerrillas are fighting their government for several different reasons. In spite of the new amnesty which covers even murder, many who fought in ELAS in December, 1944, do not dare go home because the relatives of the men and women they killed at that time will try to avenge them. Others of the guerrillas are in the mountains because they found no peaceful means of sustenance in Greece in her distraught state. Hundreds are men who are kidnapped by the guerrillas when they attack and burn the villages, and are compelled, by threats against their families or themselves, to fight in the guerrilla forces. Others have gone to the mountains because of a confused idealism, attracted by communist promises of a better Greece.

No matter what the motivation of any person or group of persons, the underlying reason why the guerrillas are fighting in Greece is the determination of the Soviet Government, of its satellite henchmen who control Yugoslavia and Bulgaria and Albania, and of the fanatic Greek communist leaders, trained in Moscow, to put across the communist revolution in Greece as their communist colleagues have put it across in the Baltic States and Poland, in Rumania and Hungary, and as they have been trying to do in France and Italy and will no doubt try to do in Austria.

Without the front of credulous idealists who believe the communists' promises and will not believe in their crimes until they have had some personal experience of them, Soviet imperialism would long since have been seen for what it is. We would then all be safer from the stream of propaganda which makes so many of the simpler-minded among us distrust our own side in this giant struggle of the democracies to save from extinction the blessing of human freedom.

Communications

"PLEA FOR ECONOMISTS"

Inglewood, Calif.

TO the Editors: Mr. Cort's "Plea for Economists" was well put, but I think he is jumping the gun. There is still much to be thrashed out by the social thinkers before the practical points of the Economic Revolution can be studied.

We have on the one hand the Catholic Worker movement proposing a return to crafts so that each worker creates a finished product starting with basic materials and engaging in all operations. On the other hand we have the trade unionists separating all men into particular skills, not allowing a plumber to drive a nail or a carpenter to cut off a piece of pipe. We have on the one hand the leftists of the Reverend George G. Higgins school advocating Super-Cartels which include not only all management of an industry but all labor too. Then on the other hand we have the rightists of the Reverend Edward A. Keller school defending free enterprise.

All this is encouraging, but at the same time very disturbing. It is encouraging in that it indicates vigorous intellectual activity among the Catholic fold. It is very disturbing in that *all* these diverse groups justify their views by referring to Catholic teaching and especially the recent Encyclicals. It is shocking that products of Catholic education do not have the emotional honesty to distinguish between logic and rationalization. It is downright embarrassing when these groups assume pontifical powers and question the morality of those who do not agree with their views.

To remedy this situation, I propose an organization and an organ. The organization would be a "Catholic Association of Manufacturers." The organ would be a publication of the CAM. The purpose would be to get the manufacturers (Labor, Management, and the Professions who make up the manufacturing team) together in order to define terms, make basic assumptions, study possible solutions and their inherent weaknesses, and check (by experiment if possible) the solutions. The organ would invite the best in thought from all the above mentioned economic groups from all parts of the world. It would also publish the findings of the studies made by the CAM.

I maintain that such an organ and organization are very badly needed. Their most important function would be that of bringing the several diverse elements of moral socio-economic thought to a common sounding board, whereas today, the leftists listen to the leftists and the rightists to the rightists. A diverse audience of stern and discerning critics would be a chastening influence indeed on our thinkers.

I am immensely proud of the eternal youth and vigor of Catholic thought. But I am not very proud of its present manifestations in the field of socio-economics.

RICHARD J. KULDA.

THINGS WORTH FIGHTING FOR?

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: This is one of those questions which good people put to you. And they mean, "worth fighting and dying for." Not just worth dying for. But what are those things?

Our Faith? That is what they mean. But are they thinking of that? In Arabia, the American oil companies now have concessions up to the year 2000. They are getting so much oil that they say they can supply all their foreign markets and have enough left for home. In order to get this oil, they have given up their religion. The colony of American workers, their wives, children, of the American oil companies, together with the United States Air Force and its families have all given up Sunday in order to keep the good will of the Arabs. They work Saturdays and Sundays and take Thursday

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afternoon and Friday off. They have neither chapel nor chaplain.

These representatives of America, both army and commercial, have already given up their God, have sold their Christ, in order to have "the good will of the Arabs." So don't let us talk any more of saving our Faith when we beat the drums for a war with Russia. It is a war between Empires, and neither of them is Christian.

War is deviltry. It calls for sacrifices indeed, but not at the altar of love. "Greater love hath no man than this." A great blasphemy this, to use Christ's words in connection with men going to war. They go because they are drafted, because they are afraid of what their neighbors will say, because the pay is good, because the benefits accruing afterward (the G.I. Bill of Rights) are great. And they are told by press and pulpit that they are going because they love their fellows, and they are filled with a warm glow of self-love. And then they are given their intensive training in how to escape death, how to kill.

Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his brothers, and the Russians are our brothers, the Negro is our brother, the Japanese are our brothers, the Germans, the Mexicans, the Filipinos, the Jew, the Arab.

The Italian Victory is not a victory. It is a postponement. The Church, the faithful, have not yet met the challenge. Christian Democrats achieved their ends by the threat of force, by the threat of civil war, by a tremendous show of force at the polls, armed force, not just the force of the cloister and the hearth. We have not yet paid the price of peace, given up the friendship, love, esteem of the world. The folly of the cross. We do not yet know what it means. Loving our enemy. We only fear him. We have great possessions, like the young man in the Gospel and we turn from Christ to the use of force to protect them. Not our Church, our school, our home. We have given up our Church in Arabia (it is an example). We have secularized our schools "they are just as good as the public schools" (just as bad) and we have no homes (see figures on divorce and juvenile delinquency). We are losing the battle at home, without the Russians lifting a finger.

So let's not have any more talk about God and country. The battle is for this world, for the possessions of this world.

DOROTHY DAY.

This letter puts everything in question once more, and naturally so because Dorothy Day wrote it, and her contemporaries have learned to expect from her no compromise, no acceptance of hate, no deviation from what she considers the demands of absolute justice and charity. That is why we cannot conceal our surprise at the passage in which she lists the reasons—all blindly selfish—for which men go to war. That passage reflects an automatism, a determinism unworthy of her thinking and style; it could have been written by one who knew nothing of the human heart and who denied the soul. It could not have been written by Charles Péguy; perhaps it should not have been written by Dorothy Day.

C. G. P.

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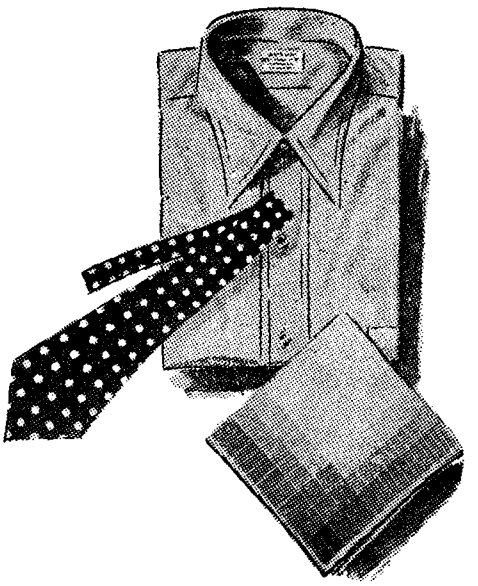

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CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FRENCH MAYORS & CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Paris (CIP)—1,800 Mayors and Councilmen from 224 cities and towns of the Maine-et-Loire Department, Western France, marched in a parade in Angers, the Department's capital, April 17, to protest against a decision of the Prefect (Governor) cancelling budget appropriations for free (Catholic) schools in the budgets of those 224 cities and towns. The statement of protest declared: "We turn to the Government of the Republic to protest against the attitude of the public powers which have cancelled the credits voted by us to the free schools, for those of their students who are economically weak. By doing so, the authorities have opposed the will of the people."

The statement of the 1,800 Mayors and Councilmen pointed out that the signers were elected to office on the basis of election platforms promising subsidies to the free schools. The Prefect of Maine-et-Loire, the protest stated, prevented the Mayors and Councilmen from keeping the promises made to their voters.

French Prefects as well as the Paris Government have consistently ruled out local subsidies to non-public schools as unlawful. The situation in France is entirely different, in this respect, from that in Belgium, for instance, where the Brussels Government has never questioned the right of local authorities to grant subsidies to free schools from local funds, in addition to the State subsidies for teachers' salaries at such schools.

RELIGION IN CZECH SCHOOLS

Prague (CIP)—Religious instruction will continue to be a regular subject in the curriculum of the public elementary and high schools of the Czechoslovak Republic, it has been announced by the Ministry of Education. Hours for this instruction will be fixed by the Ministry, but the choice of the textbooks will be left to the Churches.

On the other hand, an announcement that the Action Committee of the National Front has established a Commission for the Study of Religious and Church Problems, has caused expressions of fear that this commission will follow similar commissions established in other fields, i.e., serve as the means for extending the alleged "purge" to "reactionary" clergymen.

"TRAITORS" IN CZECH CHRISTIAN PARTY

Prague (CIP)—Opposition against the new pro-Communist leadership of the Czech People's Party, a Christian Democratic organization, is almost universal among the rank and file, well-qualified observers report. Underground leaflets which are being widely circulated demand the suspension of the party's activities and protest, in particular, against the pro-Communist line of the nominally Christian Democratic Daily newspaper, *Lidova Democracie* (People's Democracy). The paper has been publishing lists of members who have been "expelled from the party for treason." Included are the names of many persons who took an active part in the anti-Nazi resistance movement as well as of former inmates of Nazi concentration camps. There are also many priests on these lists.

After the recent Communist coup, the legitimate leaders of the Czech People's Party declared that the party organization was dissolved, but a pro-Communist "Action Committee" seized the party and the newspaper, *Lidova Democracie,* and began to "reorganize" them "in accordance with the new needs." The Chairman of the new party organization is *Father Plojhar,* a priest who entered the present Cabinet without the permission of his Bishop. The former Party Chairman, *Monsignor Jan Sramek,* who was Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London, during the war, and Vice Premier of the Gottwald Cabinet before the recent coup, is in prison. He was arrested together with *Father Frantisek Hala,* also a former Cabinet Minister, when both attempted to leave Czechoslovakia by airplane.

CATHOLIC PARTY SPLITS IN CURACAO

Willemstad, Curaçao (CIP)—Recent political developments in Curaçao, Netherlands West Indies, have marked the failure of an effort to transplant a denominational political party, which has been very successful in the Netherlands, to a country in the Western Hemisphere. The Roman Catholic Party of Curaçao has split into two uneven pieces: the National People's Party, led by the representative of the Dutch Antilles at the Hague, *Dr. M. F. da Costa Gomez,* and the Catholic People's Party, led by *J. H. Sprockel.* The National People's Party, which is non-denominational, appears to have a much stronger following than the rival group.

While the local interests and personal animosities behind these events are of little importance to the outside world, the failure of a 12-year experiment with a political organization deliberately shaped after the Dutch model would seem to prove that it was not fitted for conditions in other parts of the world. The Roman Catholic Party was founded in 1936, when the island colony was given a new constitution providing for a legislature (States) composed of 10 members elected by the people and 5 members appointed by the Governor. Since the elections required the formation of political parties, da Costa Gomez and Sprockel, both of them educated in the Netherlands, launched the Roman Catholic Party. It appealed to all Catholics for support. As the Catholics form almost 90 per cent of the population, the party became dominant. The fact, however, that the majority party called itself "Catholic" had the result that the minortiy parties became more or less anti-Catholic, not for religious but for political reasons.

In 1945 it became obvious that the Democratic Party, based largely on anti-Dutch sentiments among the people, was gaining strength and that the Catholic Party, torn by dissensions, would not be able to survive.

The Netherlands, the Dutch colonies, and Switzerland are at present the only countries in the world where the word "Catholic" appears in the name of political parties. In some parts of Switerland it has been replaced by "Christian Social" or "Christian Democratic."

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The Stage & Screen

The Alchemist

JOSE FERRER and the New York City Theatre Company have done it again. The production of the Ben Jonson comedy is extraordinarily well acted, well set, well conceived and well staged. Unquestionably it must be gaining its author his desired "understanders" these evenings at the City Center. I imagine all students know the fable of this classic satire on quackery whereby Doctor Subtle and Servant Face, with the assistance of their colleague, Doll Common, successfully juggle the citizens of London during a plague year. However, the movers of the show have allowed for the mere spectator as well as the bookmen. Jonson's argument is printed in the program and even spoken as introduction to the prologue. The business is, of course, an affair of doors and crannies with a dupe securely hidden beyond each one, and all goes as rambunctious as possible until the final "fume." I must say I think Herbert Brodkin's set contributed more than fifty percent of the amusement of the action. Providing at least seven exits plus a balcony and rooftop, it allows Morton Da Costa, the director, to use the stage front for street doings, and the entire house for inner shenanigans. A very neat, useful, and attractive job. George Coulouris has joined the company for this spring season and it is excellent to be able to report that his Subtle justifies the term. The very greasiness of his wig fills one with awe. Mr. Ferrer himself in the winning rôle is astonishingly nimble. It is true, I think, that his sophomoric attack does seem to do best in farces of this nature, and again he is still a kind of junior Alfred Lunt, nevertheless it is he who sets the pace here and it is the pace which lifts the show from wordiness into froth. I thought Ezra Stone's Mammon also fatly fine, while Hiram Sherman's Angry Boy was a mild disappointment. Nan McFarland's Doll made one earnestly wish for Joyce Redman, but aside from these quibbles—and they are quibbles—the piece is honestly a four-star number. (*at the City Center.*)

Habimah

THE DISTINCTIONS of this famous Jewish Company are so varied, it is difficult to know where to begin a description. A good many of my colleagues seem to feel that there is a language barrier for American audiences to hurdle in attending the repertory. I must say at once that this circumstance never occurred to me. It is true, I saw the "Dybbuk"—Ansky's classic legend—in London many years ago. But even with "David's Crown," a piece with which I was wholly unfamiliar, I felt that the ritualistic acting supplied a language of its own. You have in this latter piece, of course, a kind of catalogue of Biblical names to guide you. It appears that David never spoke to any of his sons, nor to God, without mentioning the name, so that actually the *direction* of meaning is clear and one is able immediately to identify Amnon, Absalom, Solomon, and so forth, without reference to the program.

But it is the magnificence of voice and gesture, which is so startling to an occidental audience. Quite honestly, *magnificent* is the only term. Here are actors who will dare anything: they orate, whisper, grumble, and sing; and they dance; and they pause. They are formally impressive. In the main, they are done up in primary colors; their sets are Meyerhold simple; their comportment is as foreign as it is fascinating. Unless one should want to spend all of one's theater-time at "Medea" down at the Royale, I can imagine no experience more rewarding than a visit to the Broadway, while the company is still there. The repertory for the next two weeks includes "The Golem" and "Oedipus Rex." Sight unseen, I will boldly underline both these productions as necessary. (*at the Broadway.*)

Ballet Ballads

THE EXPERIMENTAL Theatre's final offering shoots a new term into existence and closes what I would call a record season, and a record service. Not only has Broadway been well fed by the six offerings displayed by E.T. for the year 1947-48, but I think a good many embryonic playwrights must have been nourished just by the spectacle of so much invention. Which is, as everyone will agree, the point. For this final biz, a definition is in order. According to John Latouche (lyricist) and Jerome Moross (composer), a Ballet Ballad consists in simultaneous song and dance —just that and nothing more. There is no spoken dialogue, very little silence. In the three stories these two have chosen to set, sometimes the narration is taken by an extra character, most often it is sung by a dancer with an inherent part in the action. The three stories are: "Susanna And The Elders" choreographed by Katherine Litz; "Willie The Weeper" choreographed by Paul Godkin; and "The Eccentricities Of Davey Crockett" by Hanya Holm. All of these are done into neat, often hilarious, lyrics by Mr. Latouche. The first is a version of the Biblical story, not particularly inventive, I thought, but beautifully sung by Richard Harvey as a Preacher, and so danced by Miss Litz, herself. The second—a saga of a dope addict—borrowed a good deal of melodrama from Nat Karson's brilliant lighting, and hurled its hero, Mr. Godkin, all over the stage and up

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and down innumerable steps, to wonderful and nostalgic singing by a boy called Robert Lenn, and wonderful, wonderful dancing by Sono Osato. The third, the plum, gave us such astonishing design of action to music by Miss Holm, I am tempted to ask if the company had not been rehearsing with this particular skeleton set for years, rather than weeks. I am also tempted to ask where such an amount of playing talent was discovered by the producers. Everyone can not only dance, but truly sing—and the material is not easy. For my money, two points emerge from the production: the first will be that the enormous extravagance of such a monster as "Allegro" should never occur again; and the second—that the so-called "absolute ballet" had better now begin on the ground, where everything ought to start, and only thereafter soar into a learned and unclinical air. There is, I think, perhaps a quarrel with this new form in that Mr. Latouche's verbal wit never allows for a resting place—a moment for the dancers to take over completely. And I, personally, would like to hear some of the rhymes spoken, rather than always sung. But this last is frank prejudice. In the meantime, I can only assure non-subscription people that if E.T. can only be persuaded to open this business to a paying public, it must not be missed. (*at the Maxine Elliott.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

No Run of No Mill

USUALLY the high-brow movie-goers are pretty lucky in getting fare that appeals to the intellect as well as the eye; whether they are that lucky in this new batch of international films depends on how high their brows are.

"The Brothers," imported from England and based on an L. A. G. Strong novel, is as gloomy and sexy as any Thomas Hardy story. It has been beautifully produced by Sidney Box with emphasis on the rocky Scotch-island locale and a good cast whose characterizations are first-rate. What these characters do is something else again. Be sure you can stand some pretty strong stuff, because the plot about an orphan (Patricia Roc) taken in by a family consisting entirely of males is nothing for the faint-hearted. The girl is torn apart in several ways: by loving the younger brother who will have nothing to do with her (at first), by hating the elder brother who wants to have too much to do with her, and by dallying with a member of a rival clan whose intentions are no more honorable than the other primitive men on this island. The script has been expertly written. I can't say as much for the film's morals; but the whole piece has been so strangely edited and revised for American consumption that it is difficult to blame any of the film's makers for the finished product. The new happy ending that has been tacked on is rather absurd when one considers the frank and seething episodes that precede it.

"Marius," a French import with English sub-titles, is downright frank too. This is part one of a movie trilogy by Marcel Pagnol. Those who saw part two, "Fanny," which for some strange reason was released here first, will already know that these characters are not bashful in their discussions of sex. No doubt their hearts are in the right place, but their attitudes are distinctly dominated by what is considered the French touch. In this picture we see how Fanny, very much in love with Marius, seduces this young man and then gives him up to his real love: the sea. Alexander Korda's direction is quite on the talky side, but his characterizations are as real as life. Pierre Fresnay and Orane Demazis as the young people are very moving, but it is the older members of the cast, Raimu and Charpin who win the acting honors. Their rôles are played to perfection, especially when they are portraying men who are fooling themselves more than the people whom they think they're fooling. At times I'm not sure that these Pagnol films are really movies, but as portraits of people they are in a class by themselves.

The Danes have sent us an item of very high calibre too. It is called *"Day of Wrath"* and is mainly concerned with 17th century witchcraft. Produced and directed by Carl Dreyer, the picture is a minor masterpiece in the study of bigotry. Although it moves very slowly, its photography is so beautiful that each shot holds our attention for itself. And the acting is excellent. The story is strictly on the adult side and not a little depressing. The witch-hunt motif is carried to the very end; and don't think these old Danes don't hunt a witch when they think one's lurking.

"Dream That Money Can Buy" is about as international as a film can come. It was written, produced, designed and directed by Hans Richter, but it also has sequences done by Fernand Léger, Max Ernst, Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray. Some ten or fifteen years ago this might have been called an *avant garde* film. Now it is pretty old stuff and actually only interesting for its repeat values. Each of these artists has cooked up a sort of surrealistic dream as part of the whole plot in which a young psychiatrist dishes out dreams to all comers. Most of the dreams are rather hard to follow, but the best one, a satirical gem by Léger about a couple of mannequins, is a honey. And you don't have to be a psychologist to follow its meaning. Approach the others with care and scientific guide books.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

JOHN C. CORT

PRESIDENT TRUMAN needs a new pair of glasses. Everyone can see the handwriting on the wall but the man to whom it was written. He still appears convinced that he can be re-elected in November.

Perhaps this is the result of a too slavish study of history. After the first World War the American people rushed "back to normalcy" from the emotional and idealistic plateau they had occupied during the Wilson administrations. It would be easy to draw a parallel between Wilson and FDR. And perhaps Truman, without believing himself as good-looking as Harding, feels that he combines the more comforting features of our post-war presidents, plus just a dash of liberalism, enough to meet the demands of a new era.

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But the era is newer than Mr. Truman figures, if this is the way he is figuring. There is Russia, for one thing. And there is Wallace, for another; and Stassen, for another; and a big, powerful labor movement, for another. And a student of history should know that in modern times no Democratic President has been elected unless he first won the votes of a major portion of the working class.

Labor leaders cannot deliver the votes of their members, as John L. Lewis learned in 1940, to his sorrow. Nevertheless, they would not be leaders unless their opinions carried considerable weight with those members. And so it is safe to conclude that a number of labor leaders acting together can deliver a goodly number of votes. Also, a lack of enthusiastic support on the part of those leaders will certainly be reflected in the numbers of union members who don't bother to vote.

As of this moment President Truman has the enthusiastic support of no important leader in the American labor movement. William Green, president of the AFL, has defended him, and it is probable that most of the AFL officials and railway labor executives would stick with him to the end, but with a spectacular lack of enthusiasm. A small group can be expected to support almost any Republican but Taft. Another small group in the AFL will go for Wallace.

In the CIO a sizable number of leaders—almost exclusively from those unions and locals that are communist-dominated—are already whooping it up for Wallace. Practically none will support a Republican, whether he be a pseudo-liberal like Stassen, a smart reactionary like Taft or a slick question mark like Dewey. The record of the Republican Party is too clear and too awful.

There remains that growing group of leaders, both in the CIO and AFL, which is at the same time anti-Wallace, anti-Republican and anti-Truman. This group includes James B. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the CIO, who probably reflects the feelings of the silent Phil Murray, CIO president. Also the popular Walter Reuther, now more popular than ever since the recent attempt on his life; Emil Rieve, president of the Textile Workers; John Green, president of the Shipbuilding Workers; and Louis Hollander, head of the N. Y. State CIO and a top leader in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

In the AFL so far the anti-Trumanites include Max Zaritsky and Hugo Ernst, top men in the Hatters and in the Hotel & Restaurant Workers, respectively, and Charles Zimmerman, a vice-president of the Ladies' Garmen Workers, who probably expresses the unexpressed thoughts of the influential Dave Dubinsky.

There is no intensity in the anti-Trumanism of most of these people, although some of the Jewish members of the group feel strongly on the question of the Administration's Palestine policy. In fact, most of them are kindly disposed toward the President. By and large they like his policies, and have said so. They don't like his frequent lukewarmness in pursuing those policies; they don't like some of his appointments. Most of them belong to the Americans for Democratic Action, the anti-communist liberal movement, and it can be expected that they will stick together. They represent a potent force. They also represent a group that will be hot for a real labor party if the Democrats fizzle in November.

And what is their alternative to Truman for the Democratic nomination? Eisenhower or Douglas, meaning the Supreme Court Douglas. If Dewey is still a question mark after a decade in political life, it must be admitted that Eisenhower is even more of one after no political life at all. People who should know claim that he is liberal, and of course he must have said something at that dinner in Washington that raised the hackles on the necks of the more conservative gentlemen who were present. He is still, if he will pardon the expression, pretty much of a pig in a poke. If he is going to run, in short, he had better start running soon.

Eisenhower's most appealing quality is that he is a cinch to win. It appears that there is no chance of his running, however, unless Truman first withdraws. And Truman doesn't want to withdraw. Somebody is telling him that he can win. Somebody is selling him a bill of goods.

The problem then is as follows: if we want to have even a moderately progressive administration for the next four years, it is essential to inform President Truman of the facts of life. How that is to be done is another question. Gael Sullivan, the handsome executive secretary of the Democratic National Committee, has resigned rather than go down with a sinking ship. That might make an impression. But it is likely that a larger and louder chorus will be necessary to break through the circle of phony enthusiasm that surrounds every powerful and successful man.

The labor movement is watching this thing with more than the usual anxiety because it stands to lose more than most from any administration that is even slightly more conservative than the administration that we have right now. It also stands to lose more from a big Wallace vote. So if you know anybody in the White House, or even if you don't, this might be a good time to drop him a line.

"PLEA FOR ECONOMISTS"

WE RECEIVED a letter from Dr. Friedrich Baerwald, Fordham economist and author of that excellent new book, "Fundamentals of Labor Economics," a letter which throws some light on why Catholic colleges have not been developing "more and better economists," as urgently requested in this column.

Dr. Baerwald points out that such development "requires full-time study, a complete dedication to the chosen field of inquiry, and an unhurried, methodical pursuit of general and special studies."

Full-time students need funds. "Such funds," says Dr. Baerwald (that is, fellowships and research grants), "are either non-existent or entirely inadequate in our Catholic universities."

Students who have to work their way through school "cannot be expected to become that type of outstanding Catholic economist whose picture was evoked" in this column. And so Dr. Baerwald concludes:

"The urgent need for this type of economist can be filled only if we can convince Catholics that they could make considerably worse use of their available funds than to endow fellowships in the social sciences in Catholic graduate schools. While money awards do not of themselves produce scholars, financial support to students who have the makings of better than average economists would be of great help. Once Catholics can be persuaded to support advanced graduate studies in economics, it might be easier to find support from those foundations and institutions which so far have not been readily accessible to requests put forward by Catholic universities to sponsor research projects and fellowships." JOHN C. CORT.

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The Pheasant Hen

ALBERT EISELE

IT WAS early one June morning when Clark Ellsworth set out to mow his field of alfalfa. A heavy fog blotted out the rising sun, and the neighboring farmplaces were visible only in their treetops, which seemed to loom in the sky like mist-encircled mountain peaks. To the southward the fog was thick and huddled, like the clouds of an approaching storm, and in the cornfields the leaves of the young plants were bent low with the grey dew. The cawing of crows was in the air.

You mowed in the rain and made hay in the sun, so Clark Ellsworth said to himself. Of course this was dew and fog and not rain, but the horses' legs and hoofs were almost instantly wet from the knee-high alfalfa, and soon they were peppered with the alfalfa's brown, spent blossoms. Through the fog came at last the sun, a disk of cool silver, and the flax fields of the countryside began to glow with the rich blue of the morning's bloom. The fog lingered longest in the distant farmplaces, where it showed in faint streaks against the dark of the trees.

Clark cut the backward swath first, then turned his horses about and began mowing the field, round by round. He hoped that he wouldn't run into a brooding pheasant hen, the way he did last year. He remembered that episode just as if it had happened an hour ago. The hen, at being hit, rose into the air, feathers trailing from her as though she had been riddled by shot; but soon she slanted toward earth and landed with a thump. The hen had been cut badly, and in a little while was dead.

That was funny, how not even the rattle of a mowing machine could make a brooding pheasant hen leave her nest. There were flushing devices that one could make and fasten to the mower, but these were not always effective and Clark rarely mowed his first or June cutting of alfalfa without mowing into a pheasant hen or two. Sometimes the hen escaped without injury, but not often. Clark was of course accustomed to those little tragedies of the field—the garter snake being cut in two by the rolling coulter, the frog or field mouse being buried alive by the falling furrow. But the pheasant hen was a notch higher than the common fauna of the field, and Clark could never mow into a pheasant hen without having it spoil his day. Once he had run into a hen, he no longer could take joy in the mowing, not only because of a pheasant hen killed but because of a continual and heightened dread of that commotion over the sickle, that explosive eruption which would tell him that he had run into a second hen. Pheasants were fond of hiding their nests in alfalfa fields, and the pheasant brooding season coincided with the alfalfa's first mowing. That was a great pity.

*

He mowed for more than two hours, then his hopes began to rise. He now had the field half-mowed, and if he could get over to where that huge bull thistle loomed in the alfalfa he would feel easier, because pheasant hens, when they made their nests in an alfalfa field, generally stayed near the fence-rows. The bull thistle was well toward the center of the field.

He reached the bull thistle and mowed it down, and the large weed fell with the cool silver of the under sides of its leaves uppermost, so that it seemed as if a star had fallen into the swath. There were pocket gophers in the field; the sicklebar dragged through several more of the clinging mounds thrown up by the burrowing rodents; and here and there, where the alfalfa had winter-killed, were patches of shepherd's purse, already ripened.

Then it was that he mowed into the pheasant hen. With the suddenness of a bolt of lightning the hen rose from the alfalfa, directly over the sickle, but there was only a faint trickle of fine feathers trailing from her, in contrast to that cloud of heavy feathers that would have fallen from her had she been badly cut. This hen was not much hurt—perhaps nothing more than a scratch from the blunt point of a mower guard. Once in the air, the hen, with her feet tucked neatly out of sight beneath her, leveled off and flew steadily toward a cornfield. Clark breathed a sigh of relief. The hen would not return, because a pheasant hen rudely disturbed never returned to her nest, but would make a new nest elsewhere, perhaps in the security of a fence-row; where she could hatch out a second batch of eggs in peace.

Clark had stopped his horses, and from his mower seat he could see the pheasant hen's nest, with its twelve or fifteen eggs. He did not get off to examine the eggs, because what was the use? It was possible to take pheasant eggs home and put them under a brooding Rhode Island Red or Plymouth Rock, but hens never seemed able to rear baby pheasants. Many farmers had brought pheasant eggs up from the field and put them under hens, but always with indifferent results. Clark drove on, leaving the pheasant eggs to be picked out by crows.

The remainder of the mowing he finished without incident, and that afternoon the mown alfalfa cured in the sun. During the morning of the following day it likewise cured in the sun, and just before dinner Clark went out with the dump rake and raked the alfalfa into windrows. The raked hay and the farmplace trees were of the same exact shade of green.

When dinner was over Clark said to his seven-year-old son, "Johnny, do you want to go with me this afternoon and get a load of hay?"

"He said he wants to go to town with me," said Johnny's mother, who was busy washing Johnny's face and hands.

"Whatever he likes," said Clark. "What do you want to do, Johnny—go to town with mama, or to the hayfield with me? Take your choice."

"Go with you to get hay, daddy!"

"Now, I like that!" said the mother. "Well, I'll finish washing his face anyway."

"He got to have shoes, though," said Clark, "because the hayfield has sharp stubble."

So his mother got him some shoes while his father hitched the horses to the hayrack, and soon the father

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and the little boy were on their way to the alfalfa field. When they reached the field the father set to work pitching the alfalfa into the hayrack while Johnny climbed to the ground and began darting about the field, seeking what he could find. Pretty soon the boy came running up and said, "Look, daddy, I caught a frog and he didn't even bite!"

"A greenback frog," said the father, inspecting the find. "Well, turn it loose again."

"Can't I take it home, daddy, and keep it for a while?"

"No, you can't do that. The frog has got a wife, and a whole family, and we don't want to break up a family. Take the frog back."

Johnny was disappointed, but he took the frog back to where he found it; and after a while he gave out a yell and came running, holding out in his hand the discarded skin of a small snake.

★

Some stray wisps of alfalfa fell off a lifted forkful and landed across Clark's eyes; they clung to his sweated face, the alfalfa stems looming large like prison bars, but they were not prison bars, and for that Clark was thankful. The day was warm, and so Clark stuck his fork in the ground, sat down in the shade of the wagon and tried to explain: "You see, Johnny, every once in a while a snake throws away her skin! She does that so she can grow a new one!"

"Is the old skin full of holes?"

"No, the snake just wants a new skin. A fresh one. So she throws away her old skin and grows a new one."

"But how does she throw away her old skin, daddy?"

"Well, I wouldn't know just how she does it. I've never watched one."

These difficult questions continued until Clark was glad to return to work. Johnny wandered away, and some time later, when Clark looked up and could see his boy nowhere, he called out.

"Here I am," cried Johnny, from under the wagon. He was lying prone on the reach, in the fashion of a tramp riding the rods of a boxcar.

"Get out from under there this minute!" ordered Clark. "You'll fall off and get run over! Don't you ever ride under there again! Go and find another frog, and by that time I'll be loaded and then we'll both climb on the load!"

The boy began exploring in the hayfield again; he went over toward the center of the field, near the spot where the day before his father had mowed into the pheasant hen; and suddenly he called to his father: "Here's a nest of eggs! But the eggs are all eaten up!"

"Pheasant eggs!" his father called back. "Yesterday I ran into a mama pheasant there. But I didnt' hurt her." (It surely didn't take the crows very long to find an abandoned pheasant hen's nest and pick out the eggs.)

"My gosh!" exclaimed Johnny, as he was still peering at the ruined nest. "Daddy, you showed me the snake threw away her skin—now the mama pheasant has throwed away both her legs!"

Books

Four Studies in Loyalty. Christopher Sykes. Wm. Sloane. $3.00.

MR. SYKES rallies his essays on an English dandy, a writer, a Persian, and some French townspeople around the flag of loyalty. It is indeed the only thing they have in common. Loyalty can occur in interesting ways and sometimes for rather unexpected objects. The solitary light in Bahram Kirmani's life, to which the Falstaffiian Persian remained faithful to the end, was Balliol College, Oxford—of which he had never been a student.

The scope of the book is wider than the title would indicate. Through the essays runs an interesting portrait of the Oxford intellectual in the person of the author, and there is a glimpse of Persian culture, its spirit and mosques and architecture, that tempts one to explore further. The author does not discuss loyalty in the abstract, merely describes it in the characters of the people he has chosen to write about. And he has chosen very separate and interesting people.

Christopher Sykes, the author's namesake and great-uncle, spent a large part of his life bearing the brunt of the practical jokes of the Prince of Wales. The mournful looking dandy of the Edwardian era maintained his famous friendship with and loyalty to the Prince at the expense of his dignity and his purse. He was wont, upon having wine spilled down his neck at a banquet, to merely murmur, "as Your Royal Highness pleases." The loyalty of Robert Byron to Greece and to his generation in general was perhaps spent on a more worthy object but hardly taken more seriously. This is the principal essay in the book, and there is a detailed study of the books of this brilliant young Englishman who was to die before the full flowering of his literary talent. The individual tales of loyalty of the French villagers during the second World War is a little different, having more the tone of a story than an essay. One is quite spellbound in admiration of their heroism.

Of these people Mr. Sykes writes with dignity. The book is the product of a scholarly, well traveled Englishman who writes with a perceptive eye in a studied, graceful prose. It were as if he had time to sit down and discuss his subject, and one is only aware of the prose when the detail is a bit fully stated. A flaw in the work perhaps is a lack of warmth or a certain formality of approach. This is apt to be a characteristic of the essay, however; it gives the book a slight Victorian manner.

ANN HUNTER.

President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941. *Charles A. Beard. Yale.* $5.00.

WITH THIS sequel to his "American Foreign Policy in the Making, 1932-1940," Dr. Beard culminates his indictment of Franklin D. Roosevelt for involving the United States in World War II. These two volumes also bring a brilliant and distinguished scholarly career to an end, for the dean of American historians cannot expect to maintain his standing as an objective historian after cloaking a partisan volume with all the apparatus of scholarship and presenting the result as impartial history. Dr. Beard subtitles this volume "A Study in Appearances and Realities," but it is evident that his mind was made up about the realities before he

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began to study the appearances. Valid history is not written in this fashion.

In the earlier volume, published in 1946, Dr. Beard presented a record of Roosevelt's public statements on foreign policy through the presidential campaign of 1940. The present volume carries on the story with the coming of war in 1941, after Lend-Lease, the Neutrality Patrol, the Atlantic Conference, and the growing crisis of our relations with Japan had led up to Pearl Harbor and to the subsequent declarations of war upon us by the Axis Powers. Three-fifths of the book is then devoted to the unfolding of the Pearl Harbor story through the Knox, Roberts, Army Board, Navy Court, and Joint Congressional Committee investigations. In an epilogue Dr. Beard dismisses the argument which he has previously left out of his reckoning, that "The great end which President Roosevelt discerned and chose justified the means which he employed. As a farsighted statesman he early discovered that unless the United States entered the war raging in Europe, Hitler would be victorious; and the United States, facing alone this monstrous totalitarian power, would become a victim of its merciless ideology and its despotic militarism." Dr. Beard points to the rise of Russia, the postwar capitulation of principles, international disorder, and domestic debt burden, as the end of Roosevelt's foreign policy which did not justify the means he adopted to enlist the American people in its support. He says nothing of another possible interpretation of the record which he mentions: that it constitutes a bill of indictment against Roosevelt and his administration. But this is, in effect, exactly what Dr. Beard's version of the record constitutes. And his final conclusion, that "At this point in its history the American Republic has arrived under the theory that the President of the United States possesses limitless authority publicly to misrepresent and secretly to control foreign policy, foreign affairs, and the war powers," is clearly an indictment in constitutional terms of President Roosevelt and his administration. Beard, always an isolationist and anti-Roosevelt, though he makes no mention of his record in those respects, concludes that there is "no divinity hedging our Republic against Caesar." It would be difficult to sum up in clearer terms the old argument that Roosevelt in fighting dictatorship brought dictatorship to America.

It is curious to find emotional hatred of Roosevelt so harsh and unrelenting three years after the death of a man who is generally recognized at home and abroad as one of America's greatest Presidents, and who has left a gap in national and international life which no one has been able to fill. But it is tragic to find isolationist views still so deeply cherished by the most distinguished American historian, when the world stands in such desperate need of aid and leadership from the United States. There will be few, is seems, who can share Dr. Beard's mystic faith in the infinite wisdom of Congress being exercised in the prompt and flexible fashion demanded to formulate and conduct foreign policy, foreign affairs, and if need be the war power, successfully under present conditions. Nothing in our history in general, nor in the record spread out in this book, justifies such implicit reliance on Congress and such restriction of the Executive. Dr. Beard ignores the fact that those who upheld in Congress the isolationist position with which he associates himself were the most undistinguished of politicians, with the exception of Senator Taft, who has since modified his views, and Senator Vandenberg, who has reversed them. The chief value of this book lies in its documentation, particularly in that drawn from the ten-million-word record of the Joint Congressional Committee; its conclusions cannot be accepted in view of Dr. Beard's bias and the admittedly partial nature of the evidence upon which he bases them. He indicates indignantly that after publishing the forerunner of this volume, he was refused access to the Roosevelt Papers and the collaboration of the State Department. But a polemicist should not expect to enjoy the privileges of the historian.

MASON WADE.

Lost Boundaries. W. L. White. Harcourt. $1.50.

BEHIND this simple story simply told lies the complex maze of an absurd social pattern rooted in irrational prejudice which warps and twists the lives of thousands of innocent victims caught in its toils. This is the story of a boy who did not learn until he was sixteen years old that he was a Negro. In that respect it is not typical of the average Negro's experience in a society that is afflicted with the psycho-somatic disease of race prejudice.

Albert Johnston, Jr., at the age of sixteen was an average American boy, completely interested in the New England environment in which he had grown up, popular with boys and girls, captain of his school skiing team, competent in his studies. His father and mother were Negroes, but neither their children nor their neighbors knew it. After his graduation from Rush Medical College in Chicago, Albert Johnston, Sr., had found that the fact of his Negro ancestry made it extremely difficult for him to employ his skills for the benefit of suffering humanity. So, because both were light complected, he and his wife had "passed." In the small New England town where he became a successful general practitioner and later a specialist in radiology, Dr. Johnston and his family were accepted by their neighbors without reserve. He took an active part in civic and club affairs. His wife was equally active and equally popular in the social and civic life of the community. Their children grew up never suspecting that thef were Negroes.

Then came Pearl Harbor. Dr. Johnston, moved by sincere patriotism, volunteered for medical service in the Navy. The Navy, meticulously careful to observe the absurdities, put its investigators to work and, delving into Dr. Johnston's past, discovered that he was a Negro! He was rejected. In a moment of bitterness and lacerated pride, he told Albert that he was a Negro.

The rest of the story tells what the discovery did to Albert. From a normal, well balanced, popular, promising youngster he is radically changed. He finds himself all mixed up, confused, uncertain, beset with fears and with a sense of insecurity. He becomes psychoneurotic, nearly goes utterly to pieces, almost slips into a frame of mind that might easily have led to the penitentiary, the gutter or to a mental institution.

Actually it was neither the fact that he was a Negro nor the discovery of that fact that did these things to him. It was the fact that the idiotic and murderous pattern of prejudice in this country makes it impossible for a Negro to live a normal, rational, integrated life in our society. Albert Johnston was exactly the same boy the day after his discovery as he had been the day before, and yet, without anything changing in him, his whole relationship to his world was fundamentally altered, twisted.

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Most Negroes succeed in working out a more or less tolerable adjustment that at least permits them to retain their sanity. But Albert was sixeen years old before he was made aware of the problem and filled with the confused uncertainties about his position in society.

The tragedy of Albert Johnston's story is that it is a *true story. W. L. White has told the story without em*bellishment, without rhetoric. He points no morals, draws no conclusions. He does not have to. The story speaks for itself and is a crushing indictment of the pattern of prejudice which does such murderous things to the human spirit. GEORGE H. DUNNE.

François Mauriac: In Search of the Infinite. Elsie Pell. Philosophical Library. $2.75.

MLLE. PELL'S title is to be interpreted very strictly; her essay deals with only one aspect of Mauriac's work; in ninety pages it would be difficult to do more. Mauriac, she says, regards all earthly passions as perverted expressions of the hunger for God that is in every human being. The "satisfaction" of those passions is momentary and illusory; God's grace alone can truly satisfy; sensual and material gratifications end by leaving us with a more insatiable hunger than before.

Some of Mlle. Pell's chapter-headings, such as "Literary Influences" and "The Second World War," suggest that she intended a more exhaustive study, but whatever her intentions, she is most attracted by and best fitted to discuss the search for the infinite undertaken by the heroes and heroines of Mauriac's novels. Those interested will find a more comprehensive study of Mauriac in three recent issues of *The Bell,* an Irish literary monthly. The author is Donat O'Donnell, and I believe a condensation of his three articles is to appear over here in the near future.

Mlle. Pell tends to give the impression that Mauriac's work is all of one piece, whereas Mr. O'Donnell points to a definite change in the novelist's outlook which occurred in the early 1930's. Of the two novels which she analyzes in most detail, "Genitrix" and "The Vipers' Tangle," the first was published in 1923 and the second in 1932. She does not have very much to say about Mauriac's more recent work.

What I liked best about this essay was its thorough and precise evaluation of Mauriac's debt to his two great French masters, Racine and Pascal, and of the Jansenist coloring that his work inherits from them and from his mother's teaching. "The Vipers' Tangle" borrows its title from a famous line by Racine that anyone with a smattering of French ought to know [Well, a Gift Subscription may be entered free by the first reader who will tell us the reference.—EDS.] but few who write on Mauriac in English can lay claim to even half of Mlle. Pell's knowledge of the French classics.

Oddly enough, her study has little to contribute to the lively discussion of the place of the Catholic writer begun by Harry Sylvester and continued by Mary Perkins and Mason Wade in THE COMMONWEAL. This would be an opportune time to publish a translation of *François Mauriac et le Problème du Romancier Catholique* by Charles du Bos. Mauriac is very conscious of this problem; thanks to Mlle. Pell, I have just read his *Le Mal* for the first time and I feel I must quote the last sentence. "It is our bondage and our affliction," he writes, "that we can depict truthfully only the passions." By "we," of course, he

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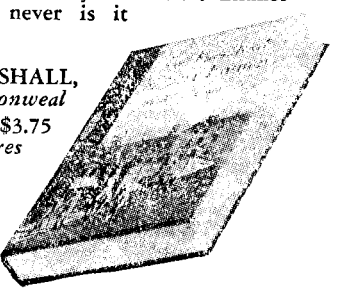

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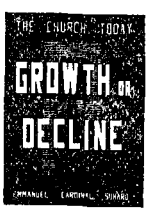
REVIEWS!

GROWTH OR DECLINE?

By Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard



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Next Week

LIBERTY—FOR WHAT? by Pierre Conway. The idea, "as American as apple pie," or the metaphor, "America is the corner drugstore, America is the girl with freckles whose books you carry home from school, America is the cab driver who refuses to drive you to Brooklyn," is quite familiar. But, as Father Conway contends, in this well-documented article, "when something which calls itself democratic, and is neither an apple pie, a drugstore, a girl with freckles or a cab driver, comes along, how does one know whether it is the real thing? . . ."

CONTROL OF PROFITS IN BRITAIN, by Paul Derrick, explains a device which has been proposed under the Labor Government and makes Americans think of their own struggles with the wages-prices-profits tangle. Mr. Derrick makes a persuasive plea for limitation of profits as a means of forestalling continuous and inflationary pressure for wage increases on the part of labor unions. A timely and constructive suggestion.

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means all novelists, Catholic or not.

I do not know whether Mlle. Pell wrote this study in French or in English, but it is certainly badly edited. She has written a slight but stimulating book; the reader who pays a stiff price for it has the right to expect freedom from glaring errors that have crept in. If some reviewer does not carp occasionally, we shall never have a uniformly professional standard of translation from foreign languages into English. VIVIAN MERCIER.

The Papacy and European Diplomacy, 1869-1878. *Lillian P. Wallace. Chapel Hill.* $6.00.

IN RECENT years there has been a growing interest in the diplomatic struggles that filled the pontificate of Pius IX. For nearly sixty years after the fall of Rome it was taken for granted in learned circles in England and America that the Pope had been entirely wrong in his attitude, and that the existence of a united and centralized Italy was not only desirable but inevitable. Similarly, his relations with France and Germany were misunderstood. The process of reassessment now going on has produced several very useful books, nearly all by non-Catholics, which give a much more balanced and sympathetic account of the problem presented to all of Europe by the bitter and apparently irreconcilable conflict between the Holy See and Italian Nationalism. The force of that dispute was felt particularly in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. Dr. Wallace has written a very interesting account of the closing years of Pius IX, after the fall of Rome, and gives a clear and well documented account of the Roman Problem in European diplomacy, even after it had been settled "forever" by force, and parts of the Protestant world were celebrating the "final disappearance" of the Papacy as a factor in international affairs. She has evidently tried hard to be fair to both sides. This book will be very useful to students of modern Church history and should stimulate the writing of further studies in English, including some from the strictly Catholic viewpoint. The latter are necessary because even the most unbiased non-Catholic has difficulty in understanding the universal outlook of the Vatican, of which its diplomacy is only one expression, and can all too easily make the mistake of confusing the instrument with the policy it exists to serve.

F. D. COHALAN.

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